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UNCLAS OSLO 000100

SIPDIS

SENSITIVE

E.O. 12958: N/A

TAGS: [SENV](#) [PREL](#) [NO](#)

SUBJECT: NORWEGIANS INTERESTED IN FURTHER ENVIRONMENTAL COOPERATION

REF: STATE 218928

[1](#)1. (U) This message contains an action request. Please see paragraph 5.

[1](#)2. (SBU) Deputy Chief of Mission, Christopher Webster met with Norwegian Environment Ministry State Secretary Henriette Westhrin and DAS for International Environmental Cooperation Harald Dovland on January 27 to discuss UNEP Mercury Partnerships per reftel request. Westhrin indicated that Norway was interested in pursuing partnerships as suggested by the United States, but as a supplement to existing, binding agreements as the European Union favors. She explained that Norway believes binding agreements by definition represent more of a commitment to take action to solve a problem. In the case of developing countries, participating in binding international agreements allows for program funding through organs like the Global Environment Facility, thereby enhancing agreement implementation. Nonetheless, Westhrin repeated that Norway was interested in working with the U.S. on partnerships and requested more information on U.S. initiated mercury partnerships in which Norway may participate.

[1](#)3. (SBU) Norway is interested in continued engagement with the United States on climate change issues as well. DAS for International Environmental Cooperation Harald Dovland stressed that U.S. engagement on climate change is key to addressing the issue. In discussing the outcome of the recent Montreal United Nations Climate Change Conference, Westhrin asked in what capacity the USG would be willing to discuss further climate change initiatives.

[1](#)4. (SBU) Westhrin said that Norway's Barents Regional Management Plan (BRMP) slated for release in early spring is making good progress and that current work involves combining separate sector plans (energy, fisheries, environment, shipping) into a coherent whole. The project goal is to give Norway a coordinated plan for sustainable development of the region's resources, taking into account public, environmental, and private sector interests. The plan will be presented to the Norwegian parliament where specific policy decisions driven from plan recommendations will be made.

[1](#)5. (U) ACTION REQUEST: Post requests Department provide additional information on U.S. initiatives under the mercury partnership program that we may forward to the Norwegians. Post also requests guidance on the U.S. position regarding any future climate change dialogues as agreed to in the Montreal conference. END REQUEST
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WHITNEY

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